United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1506
25 October 1993

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

+ Secretary-General arrives in United Kingdom for two-day visit after stops in Ethiopia and Egypt; condemns recent coup-d'état in Burundi.

+ In message for United Nations Day, Secretary-General says Member States must provide Organization with enough resources and see missions through to the end; successes have outweighed setbacks in last year.

+ Special Representative Howe condemns Somali-on-Somali violence in Mogadishu and calls on all parties to stop fighting immediately; says Somalis must show world that they can live together in harmony.

+ Dante Caputo, Special Representative for Haiti, calls for protection for Haitian Parliamentarians as they debate laws on new police force and amnesty; suggests that world leaders come to Port-au-Prince to serve as "witnesses".

+ One United Nations relief worker killed and eight wounded in Central Bosnia and Herzegovina as convoys come under fire; death brings to 10 the number of people killed working with United Nations humanitarian missions in former Yugoslavia.

+ UNOMUR fully deployed at authorized strength, Secretary-General says in report to Security Council; reconnaissance of Uganda/Rwanda border concluded.

* * *

Secretary-General Boutros-Ghali visited Addis Ababa and Cairo this weekend and then left Africa for a two-day visit to the United Kingdom, according to a United Nations spokesman. Today he attended a working luncheon given by Douglas Hurd, Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom, and he is expected to meet with Prime Minister John Major tomorrow.

(more)

For information media—not an official record

On Saturday, the Secretary-General met in Addis Ababa with the President of Ethiopia and discussed with him the situation in the Horn of Africa and the large number of Somali refugees in the country. He also received a group of people from Burundi who asked for United Nations intervention in their country. He condemned last week's coup-d'état against Burundi's democratically-elected President and expressed concern at the situation there.

The Secretary-General then left Addis Ababa for Cairo, where he met with the Prime Minister of Egypt. They discussed, among other things, the participation of Egyptian troops in United Nations peace-keeping operations in Bosnia and Herzegovina and Somalia.

* * *

In a message issued in observance of United Nations Day yesterday, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said that the Organization was indispensable for international peace and security, for humanitarian assistance, for development, for the protection of the planet and for the promotion of democracy and human rights. Member States now placed more responsibility upon the United Nations than at any time in its history, he said, and consequently they must provide it with adequate resources, recognize the changed character of conflict today and persevere in seeing missions through to the end. They must also understand that peace and security had to rest upon a foundation of economic and social development.

The successes of the past year outweighed the setbacks, and the coming year would reveal whether the international community was ready for the challenges and opportunities before it, the Secretary-General went on to say. He appealed to everyone to consider and to assist the Organization, now and in the decades ahead.

* * *

Special Representative Jonathan Howe today strongly condemned Somali-on-Somali violence in Mogadishu and called on all parties in the city to stop fighting immediately. He appealed to all citizens, and particularly to elders, religious leaders and other community representatives, "to help convince their brothers to put down their weapons and to avoid further confrontation".

The Somali people could not afford to squander the progress made so far in rebuilding their country, Admiral Howe said. Rehabilitation and reconstruction could only take place in an atmosphere of peace, and further violence would drive the country back to the despair and misery of the past. At this critical moment for the rebirth of Somalia, Somalis needed to demonstrate to the world that they could reconcile differences peacefully and live together in harmony. He went on to say that the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM II) remained fully committed to promoting national reconciliation and recovery.

* * *

(more)

Dante Caputo, the Special Representative of the Secretaries-General of the United Nations and the Organization of American States (OAS) for Haiti, this morning called for protection for Parliamentarians in Haiti, so that they could safely conduct a crucial debate on the creation of a new police force and on the question of amnesty. He said that Parliament was scheduled to debate and vote on laws regarding those issues within 48 hours. In view of the threats against Parliamentarians in the past, he stressed the importance of the military authorities in Haiti giving them "all necessary assurances and protection", in order to allow the debate to proceed.

Mr. Caputo also suggested that if world leaders who had been fighting for democracy and human rights went to Haiti, it would provide a form of moral and political protection. He cited as possible witnesses Jimmy Carter, Brian Mulroney, Michael Manley, or former Latin American Presidents Alfonsin and Sanguinetti. "Their presence here would reassure the Parliamentarians and help this process to continue," he said.

Meanwhile, a United Nations spokesman said that Haitian President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was scheduled to address the General Assembly next Thursday. Under the terms of the Governors Island Agreement he signed in July with the military leadership, President Aristide is due to return to Haiti on Saturday to resume power, two years after a military coup forced him into exile.

* * *

The Danish driver of a United Nations relief supply truck was killed this morning and eight Dutch aid personnel were wounded when their convoys came under fire near the town of Novi Travnik in central Bosnia and Herzegovina. Because of ongoing fighting in the area between Bosnian Government forces and Bosnian Croat forces, witnesses were not able to tell if the trucks were attacked deliberately or were caught in crossfire, according to a United Nations spokesman. The death of the driver brought to ten the number of relief workers who have been killed while working with United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) humanitarian missions in the former Yugoslavia.

High Commissioner Sadako Ogata warned that security conditions were worsening despite appeals from the international community that the warring sides respect humanitarian operations. "Although we are still awaiting a full report, I must emphasize that there is absolutely no excuse for an incident of this kind involving a clearly marked United Nations convoy," she said. "All sides were aware in advance that these convoys were in the region."

* * *

The United Nations Observer Mission Uganda-Rwanda (UNOMUR) has been fully deployed and has reached its authorized strength of 81 military observers, according to a report by Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali to the Security Council dated 22 October. He noted that 11 international civilian staff have also been deployed.

[more]

In the first three weeks of its deployment, the Mission concluded a thorough reconnaissance of the Uganda/Rwanda border, set up a communications network and established its headquarters. It also established observation posts at two major crossing sites on the Ugandan side of the border and had been monitoring the border with mobile patrols. Additional observation posts would be established at three secondary crossing sites and airborne coverage of the border would be provided. The Secretary-General said he was consulting the Ugandan Government on the modalities of integrating UNOMUR into the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda (UNAMIR), and thanked the Government for its cooperation and support for UNOMUR.

* *** *